THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHAJ. PATEL): (a) to (d) Oil and Natural Gas Coporation Ltd. (ONGC) had discovered hydrocarbon in the very first well it drilled on Dholka structure in 1966. The field was put on production in 1968. The field was offered in 1992 under small field development round by the Government and awarded to M/s Joshi Technologies (JTI) in 1995. ONGC produced cumulatively 0.15 MMT of Oil and 18-60 MM3 of gas from the Dholka field as on 01.04.1994. The Dholka field operated by M/s Joshi Technologies Ltd. is producing 3.30 Barrels of oil per day.

ONGC has spent Rs. 1187 lakhs on Dholka fields to conduct tests for crude oil exploration.

Crude Oil has also been discovered in the Block CB-ONN-2000/1 awarded under NELP-II to the consortium of GSPC and GAIL. GSPC has made investment of US$ 3.65 MM till 31.3.07 on exploration activities in this Block.

Budget allocation for Indo-lran gas pipeline project

3618. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US threat to the Indo-lran pipeline project will be a major setback to India in terms of expenditure on this project,

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total budget allocated to the Indo-lran-Pakistan gas pipeline project and the amount spent so far,

(d) whether Government have held any discussion with the US regarding this project after sanctions were imposed on Iran; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (e) during visit of US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice to India in March 2005, she informed the media that the US had conveyed its concerns on the proposed gas pipeline cooperation between India and Iran. The US legal position on this issue flows from its Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (USA) of 1996 that provides

for the imposition of sanctions against foreign companies that make an investment of more than US $ 20 million in one year in Iran's energy sector. The Government is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran in national interest in order to meet the energy requirements of the country. During the recent meeting between Mr. Samuel W. Bodman, US Secretary of Energy with Minister (Petroleum & Natural Gas), he was informed that India was free to pursue its energy option with any country and would act independently to pursue its interest. At present discussions are continuing amongst Iran, Pakistan and India for resolution of various contentious issues involved. Government has not made any budget allocation for the project. From Indian side, the Indian Oil Sector PSUs involved with the project, would provide necessary funds for the project. GAIL (India) Ltd. has spent Rs. 3.5 crore (Approx.) on the Technical & Financial consultants appointed for the project.

Supply of petroleum products to Nepal

3619. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to cut supplies of petroleum products to Nepal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how much loss the Indian Oil Corporation has incurred due to political turmoil in Nepal; and

(d) what steps Government are taking to recover the loss and to continue " goodwill ties with the Government of Nepal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHAJ. PATEL): (a) No, Sir

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) IOC has reported that it has not suffered any loss on account of political turmoil in Nepal.

Regulator for natural gas pricing

3620. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH. Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state: